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#Commit2Dialogue: Partnerships for Prevention and Sustaining Peace

Statement by
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Mr. Secretary General,
Mr. President,
Mr. High Representative,
Distinguished Ministers and Ambassadors,

Ladies and Gentlemen, It is a great honour for me to address the Ministerial Meeting of the Alliance of Civilizations, an organization that is central in the efforts to promote intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity.

One of the most important challenges today are the increasing manifestations of **violent extremism and terrorism**, which do not only threaten the lives of women, men and children, but also undermine trust and peaceful coexistence of our societies. Tackling this scourge does not only need countering, but preventing radicalization and violent extremism.

Hungary is committed to this cause, and we commend the Secretary-General for placing **prevention** at the heart of his mandate, and strongly support his efforts in this regard. We promote efforts of building trust and reconciliation, further strengthening the prevention, mediation, dispute resolution and early warning capacities in peacetime as well as conflict and post-conflict settings.

Furthermore, Hungary strongly believes that we have to encourage the **youth** to actively participate in peacebuilding, in social justice and reconciliation. Therefore, we very much welcome that this Global Forum placed special focus on youth, recognizing the potential and creativity of young people.

Let me share a quote with you from Kurt Vonnegut:

“What should young people do with their lives today? Many things, obviously. But the most daring thing is to create stable communities in which the terrible disease of loneliness can be cured.”

(Kurt Vonnegut, Palm Sunday: An Autobiographical Collage)

Indeed, all that we do for young people should be in the service of enabling them to become successful pillars of a resilient society. Youth is our future – a generation who will shape our societies from the next 5-10 years on. Youth should be considered as potential agents of positive change, and the protagonists for the success of the future generation, the pillars of a culture of peace and intercultural dialogue.

In Hungary, we believe that both **cultural pluralism and intercultural dialogue** have an important role in developing a peaceful and inclusive society. Cultural dialogue brings people closer together, helping them to understand each other, thus progressing towards peaceful coexistence.

To this end, the right of nationalities living in Hungary to nurture their own culture was set out in our Fundamental Law.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I quote: *“There will be no peace among the nations without peace among the religions. There will be no peace among the religions without dialogue among the religions.”* These famous words by a Swiss theologian and author Hans Küng capture the essence of why we are here today.

Indeed, intercultural dialogue cannot be envisaged without **interreligious dialogue**. All the world’s major religions, with their emphasis on love, compassion, patience, tolerance and forgiveness, have these inner values.

Unfortunately, religion is often abused to justify discrimination, violations of human rights, violence, and to constrain the freedom of expression, including against minorities.

Therefore, we have to work with religious leaders, and Hungary welcomes the work of the UNAOC in this regard.

Hungary is actively supporting efforts to maintain and rebuild livelihoods, institutions and cultural heritage of **religious minorities**, as part of our effort to preserve cultural and religious pluralism. For

instance, in the Middle East, the rebuilding of churches, schools, houses of persecuted Christian families with a robust programme.

Let me finish by commending the UNAOC for providing a platform for religious leaders from different faiths to work together towards a safer world. We are delighted to see that intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity are placed high on the international agenda and value the contributions of UNAOC in this regard.

Thank you for your kind attention.